

Report to Stakeholders 2006

• CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES OF NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN •

From the Executive Director



2007 – Our 70th Year

As Child and Family Services celebrates 70 years of providing vital human services to the northwestern Michigan community, it occurs to me that you might not be aware of the remarkable history this organization enjoys.

In 1853, Charles Loring Brace was a young minister completing his seminary studies in New York City when he became obsessed with the plight of the city's poor and homeless children. Abandoned by parents who couldn't care for them, or left to their own devices in the streets of the city where they sold newspapers or rags to survive, they formed gangs to protect themselves from violence and were often themselves locked up for vagrancy with adult criminals. Brace became convinced that the way to help these children was to get them "utterly out of their surroundings and to send them away to kind Christian homes in the country."

Thus the orphan trains were born. Brace founded the Children's Aid Society (Child and Family Services began life as the Michigan Children's Aid Society), and he and his volunteers raised money and arranged for the legal permissions to relocate children from the cities of the East Coast to the small towns and farms of the Midwest and beyond. For the next 75 years, more than 100,000 children were sent to new homes in rural America via orphan trains. Brace believed that farmers would welcome homeless children, take them into their homes, teach them meaningful work, and treat them as their own. His program became a forerunner of modern foster care. The PBS program *The American Experience* took a fascinating look at this story; you can read the transcript at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/orphan/>.

Meanwhile, here in Michigan in 2007, our society has determined that the basic needs and protection of our children are the State's responsibility, yet the State increasingly cannot pay what it costs to provide for those needs. We increasingly turn to you, our community—the way we did 70 years ago when our work was just beginning—to help us in our mission to serve children and families. Your support makes possible the successes we celebrate in these pages. They are your successes as well as ours. Thank you.

Warm Regards,

Jim Scherrer



child & family services
of Northwestern Michigan

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Executive Director's Message...A
Program HighlightsB & C
Financial StatementsD
Board of DirectorsD
Board of TrusteesD

"Thank you, on behalf of the kids that are affected... Thank you, on behalf of the loved ones that wanted a system that not only cares, but really does something to help."

from a letter to the Safe Haven
Supervised Visitation and
Exchange program



Child & Family Services 2006: Real Stories, Real Change for People in Need...

Family Group Decision Making (FGDM)

Susan* is a single mother with two severely disabled daughters, ages 18 and 29. She recently left an abusive marriage and now cares for her two children alone. She entered the FGDM program and her other adult children and family stepped in to form a strong support network for Susan. She has since been able to make many improvements in her life and her daughters' lives. One such improvement is the construction of a handicapped accessible shower in her home. Before, she was forced to lift her adult daughters in and out of the bathtub. Construction of the new shower was largely funded by community donations through Child and Family Services and WTCM Radio's "Paper Angels" holiday giving program. The changes in the family have also had a huge physical and emotional impact on the girls, who are



making attempts at vocal communication and living more fully since they do not have to fear the abuse that was previously part of their lives. "We have new hope for the future," says Susan, "and we thank Child and Family Services and FGDM for that."

"We have new hope for the future"

Susan, FGDM client

Foster Care

Jake, aged 16, and his family have journeyed a long way from the time Jake entered foster care. Jake was traumatized by sexual abuse and needed more help than his aunt and mother, whom he was living with, could give him. Jake's father, Hank, had cancer and his prognosis was poor, so living with his dad was not an option for Jake. Both Jake and his dad had trouble handling anger, which also kept them from living together peacefully. Jake came into foster care and started receiving services that helped him begin to heal. Soon after, Hank entered remission and joined his son on the path toward physical and emotional recovery. During Jake's most recent visit with his father they began to argue, but instead of blowing up at each other as they had in the past, they were able

to handle their anger rationally and ultimately realize that the argument was unimportant. Jake will be moving in with his dad very shortly. When Jake's caseworker dropped him off at his dad's for a visit, Jake stopped him and gave him a hug—affection that Jake would have been unable to show two years ago. Both Jake and Hank have made huge strides in their lives and their growth has brought them together.

"We are forever grateful to Child and Family Services for the happiness we have had with our adopted children. CFS truly transforms lives."

Mr. and Mrs. F. Bishop

Safe Haven

Carolyn had five children and had left an abusive marriage. She and her ex-husband were referred to the Safe Haven Supervised Visitation and Exchange program, which recognizes that domestic violence often increases in intensity in separation or divorce situations. Carolyn has been involved with Safe



Haven for several months and relates that she feels completely safe for the first time in years. Safe Haven allows the children to love both parents, without witnessing their conflict.



One man experienced Safe Haven via his girlfriend, who exchanged her children through the program. In a recent letter, he expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Child and Family Services: "Thank you, on behalf of the kids that are affected. Thank you, on behalf of the parents that need protection from false allegations and manipulation. Thank you, on behalf of the loved ones that wanted a system that not only cares, but really does something to help."

*all names have been changed

"I had no idea what to do. If it weren't for Child and Family Services, I can't imagine where my baby and I would be today."

Sara, Pregnancy/Birth Counseling client



Adoption

Jason, 14, and Kelly, 13, had been living with their aunt and uncle since 2002.

The couple had planned to adopt their niece and nephew, but they decided that they would not be able to follow through on their plans. Jason and Kelly were referred to Child and Family Services and were placed with a foster family who had expressed an interest in adopting. Unfortunately, the home was not a good fit for Jason and Kelly. The young brother and sister were terribly discouraged, but a new placement recently gave them fresh hope for a "forever family." By the end of the first month with their new foster parents, it was clear that the match was a good one. The family petitioned for the adoption of Jason and Kelly in July, and they expect to have a finalization hearing before the court this November. When Jason and Kelly's caseworker visited them in June, he said that the children were the happiest he had ever seen them.



Joseph and Carolyn came into foster care at a very young age because of extreme domestic violence. By the time Joseph was 4 and Carolyn was 2, both had been in and out of the foster care system several times. In February, their parents' rights were terminated and they were placed in permanent foster care. Soon after, their foster parents began the process of adopting the two children, which will be finalized in November. When the children's caseworker asked Joseph where his mommy and daddy were, he promptly pointed to his soon-to-be adoptive parents and exclaimed, "I love them!" Joseph and Carolyn's story shows how foster care and adoption can transform a child's life from one of fear and violence to one of security and love.

Thank you for your support!

2006 Highlights

409 children served in foster care

166 licensed foster homes, 37 new in 2006

53 new "forever families" created through adoption

243 hours of direct service to 47 Pregnancy/Birth Counseling clients

77 people served in 470 hours of direct service through the Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) and "Families Know Best" family conferencing programs

314 people served in Safe Haven, including 138 children

We are grateful to these partners for their generous program grants in 2006:

The Alabaster Foundation

"Families Know Best" Program

Allen-Heath Memorial Foundation

Pregnancy/Birth Counseling Program

Benzie County Community Chest

Foster Care/VOCA Programs

Child and Family Services of Michigan

Foster Care Program

Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians

Family Group Decision Making/Pregnancy/Birth Counseling Programs

GT Regional Community Foundation Youth Advisory Councils

Foster Care Program

Kiwanis Club of Traverse City

Foster Care Program

Michigan Women's Foundation

Pregnancy/Birth Counseling Program

The Oleson Foundation

General Support

Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation

Foster Care Program

Quota International of Traverse City

Pregnancy/Birth Counseling Program

Rotary Camps and Services

Foster Care Program

Rotary Club of Traverse City Good Works Fund

Foster Care Program

John and Matilda Shumsky Foundation

Treatment Foster Care Program

St. John's Episcopal Church of Harbor Springs

Foster Care Program

Stanton Charity for Children

Adoption Program

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Our Mission

To promote the safety and well-being of children, adults and families by providing services that foster and develop social and emotional healing and growth.



child & family services

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Financial Report

FOR OCTOBER 1, 2005 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2006

We generated:\$4,213,783
from grants, contracts, and private payers

We raised:..... \$684,654
from special events and other donations

With additional income of: \$41,641

For Total Revenue of:..... **\$4,940,078**

WE USED THIS REVENUE TO:

Pay 63 Employees.....\$2,364,777

Pay Foster Parents\$1,767,678

Pay Operating and Facilities Costs \$491,645

Purchase Services and Supplies \$127,257

Pay Interest and Debt Charges \$22,900

Provide Employee Development Opportunities ... \$22,096

We were unable to collect:..... \$18,154
from those unwilling or unable to pay for services

For Total Expenses of **\$4,814,507**

(With \$125,571 Remaining)

**Administrative expenses were 7.5% of total expenses.
 Fundraising costs were 5.2% of total expenses,
 for a combined total of 12.7% for 2006.**

The children who left our Foster Care Program in 2006 went to:

